

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 5373

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ADOPTS A PLATFORM  
FOR THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS

REF: ROME 17323, ROME 2482

SUMMARY: A PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING HAS FORMALLY ADOPTED PARTY SECRETARY DEMARTINO'S PLATFORM FOR THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS. DESPITE CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION, DEMARTINO SUCCEEDED IN AVOIDING AN EXPLICIT FORECLOSURE OF ANY FORM OF THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA AFTER THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS, THOUGH HIS OWN VIEW AND HIS PARTY'S WIDEST CONSENSUS MAKE THE DEMAND OF A BIPOLAR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS PARAMOUNT. IN POST-ELECTORAL OPTIONS DEMARTINO EXCLUDED ONLY THE GRAND ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT. REGARDING THE CURRENT ISSUE OF THE COMPOSITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, DEMARTINO REAFFIRMED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A "PREVALENT TENDENCY IN PRINCIPLE" TO HAVE THEM CONFORM TO THE NATIONAL FORMULA. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE CONFIRMED AGAIN DEMARTINO'S CONTROL OVER PSI STRATEGY, AT LEAST THROUGH THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. SOCIALIST (PSI) CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, APRIL 8-10, CONFIRMED SECRETARY DEMARTINO'S CONTROL OVER THE PARTY AND  
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PSI STRATEGY, AT LEAST THROUGH THE UPCOMING JUNE 15 REGIONAL

ELECTIONS. HIS POLITICAL PROGRAM, DEFINED IN THE DECEMBER 1974 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING (REFTEL 17323), AND REFINED PROGRESSIVELY SINCE, WAS OFFICIALLY ADOPTED AS THE PARTY'S PLATFORM FOR THE ELECTIONS. THE FORMAL VOTE WAS 98 IN FAVOR WITH 43 ABSTENTIONS, THE LATTER MADE UP OF THE MANCINI FACTION AND THE FAR LEFT LOMBARDI FACTION. OF THESE ONLY THE LOMBARDI FACTION REFLECTS BASIC DIFFERENCES IN POLICY. THE (20 PERCENT) MANCINI FACTION'S DISSENT WAS INSPIRED MORE BY INTRA-PARTY FACTIONAL MANEUVERING AND TACTICS THAN STRATEGY.

2. WITH REGARD TO THE PSI'S POLITICAL POSTURE DEMARTINO SUCCEEDED, DESPITE CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE IN THE DEBATE, IN REFUSING TO FORECLOSE THE PSI'S RETURN TO GOVERNMENT IN SOME (UNDEFINED) FORM OF RENEWED CENTER-LEFT. HOWEVER, HE MADE CLEAR THAT THE BASIC STRATEGY OF THE PARTY IS TO FORCE A PREFERENTIAL PSI RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DC, BY A CONVINCING PSI VICTORY IN THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS, WHICH WOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED BY THE EXPECTED DC LOSSES. THIS BASIC STRATEGY HAS THE SUPPORT OF ALL BUT THE LEFT WING, WHICH CONTINUES TO PREFER THE "GRAND ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT," I.E., SOME SORT OF SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST COLLABORATION. EARLIER EXPRESSED (TACTICAL) PREFERENCES OF SOME ELEMENTS OF THE PSI'S (AUTONOMIST (NENNI) WING FOR THE GRAND ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT HAVE YIELDED, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, TO DEMARTINO'S LOGIC THAT SUCH A TACTIC COULD ONLY MEAN SUBMISSION TO PCI HEGEMONY.

3. THE GRAND ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT WAS, INDEED, THE ONLY OPTION DEMARTINO FORMALLY EXCLUDED. IN HIS REBUTTAL CLOSING THE DEBATE, HE SAID THAT "TO EXCLUDE PSI PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT WOULD MEAN TO CONSIDER CLOSED A HISTORIC (CENTER-LEFT) PHASE AND OPEN ANOTHER WHICH COULD BE NOTHING BUT THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT...IN IT THE PSI WOULD PLAY A SUBORDINATE ROLE, WHILE THE HISTORIC SITUATION OF OUR COUNTRY REQUIRES THAT AN ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT BE LED BY THE SOCIALISTS."

4. WITH REGARD TO THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY OVER THE COMPOSITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, DEMARTINO INSISTED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A "PREVALENT TENDENCY IN PRINCIPLE" TO CONFORM TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT MODEL. THIS POSITION SHARPLY CONTRASTS THAT TAKEN BY THE MANCINI AND LOMBARDI FACTIONS.

5. DESPITE THE ONGOING BASIC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE OF FORMING A BIPOLAR AXIS WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, THE LATTER WERE THE PRINCIPAL POLEMICAL TARGET OF THE MEETING. FORMALLY, THE PSI IS CALLING FOR PROFOUND CHANGES IN THE DC'S GOVERNING STYLE AS A CONDITION FOR ITS RETURN TO GOVERNMENT.

THE DC'S ALLEGED SHORTCOMINGS, ESPECIALLY FANFANI'S CONTROVERSIAL AND SOMETIMES ABRASIVE LEADERSHIP, PROVIDED READY TARGETS FOR CAMPAIGN ORATORY.

6. COMMENT: THE PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAS FORMALIZED WHAT HAS BEEN MADE APPARENT FOR SOME TIME BY RECENT DIFFERENCES OVER MEASURES TO COMBAT CRIME, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIONS, AND OTHER ISSUES. WHILE THE DC AND THE PSI RECOGNIZE THAT THEY HAVE NO SATISFACTORY OR PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVES BUT TO COOPERATE WITH EACH OTHER, EVEN AFTER THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS, THEY WILL NEVERTHELESS CAMPAIGN DETERMINELY AGAINST EACH OTHER. BEAUDRY

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